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PUBLIC MEETING SESSION

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
DRAFT LOWER SNAKE RIVER JUVENILE SALMON MIGRATION
FEASIBILITY REPORT/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WITH
FEDERAL CAUCUS CONSERVATION OF COLUMBIA BASIN FISH
"ALL-H PAPER"

WESTMARK SHEE ATIKA
330 SEWARD STREET
SITKA, ALASKA

PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION

MARCH 7, 2000
5:30 P.M.

COURT REPORTER: WILLIAM J. BRIDGES, CM, RMR, CSR

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1 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Let me turn to
2 Stan Filler. Everybody with me here? Is this all
3 right? Just take about nine minutes here for these
4 guys and get back to questions and answers then. Get
5 to all your questions and testimony. Thanks.

6 MR. STAN FILLER: Good evening.
7 Members of the Federal Caucus, my name is Stan Filler
8 and I am the Mayor of Sitka.

9 I would like to welcome you to our
10 beautiful community and thank you for the opportunity
11 to offer a few comments about the importance of king
12 salmon fishery.

13 I am aware that you are considering actions
14 to assist the Snake River fall Chinook which have been
15 listed for protection under the Endangered Species
16 Act.

17 I want to give you some sense of how
18 further restricting Alaska fisheries will affect
19 Sitka.

20 When you landed at the airport I hope what
21 you first impression was, besides the beautiful area,
22 is that this is an island. And job opportunities are

23 extremely limited when jobs are lost in Sitka.
24 Displaced workers just can't go to the classified
25 section and go to work.

2

1 In the past the timber industry played a
2 much larger role in Sitka, and since the downturn in
3 the sector our community has been challenged to
4 diversify to continue a strong economic base.

5 Tonight we are in a meeting right now doing
6 just that.

7 I'm very concerned that you are considering
8 action which will further limit fishing opportunities
9 to Sitka. The community is more dependent than ever
10 on taxes, revenue and income that the fishery bring to
11 it. Last year 576 Sitkans fished limited entry
12 permits, 565 Sitkans bought crew member licenses.
13 Commission fisheries as a whole returned \$449,545 in
14 total raw fish taxes to Sitka, and an equal amount
15 went to the state general fund.

16 188 of the limited entry permits were for
17 salmon power troll and those trollers grossed over
18 three million dollars for their catch. Those earnings
19 are distributed throughout the community of Sitka.

20 In addition the power trollers, 120 charter
21 licenses were issued and close to \$400,000 of city
22 sales taxes were paid by the guided anglers.

23 Their charter vessels and clients support
24 the restaurants, fuel docks, merchants. The increased
25 number of planes allows for more fresh fish harvested

3

1 by the commercial guys to be shipped out so that
2 people like you in the Pacific Northwest can enjoy
3 them and your restaurants.

4 Fishing for king salmon is a major part of
5 Sitka's economy.

6 I would also like to point out that our
7 economy is your economy as well.

8 Many of the anglers who visit Sitka are
9 residents of Washington and Oregon. About 15 percent
10 of the power troll permits are held by Pacific
11 Northwest residents. Preserving recreation and
12 commercial king salmon fishing opportunities in Sitka
13 doesn't just benefit this town. It benefits the
14 entire Pacific Northwest.

15 The city of Sitka has made substantial

16 investments to foster health of the fishing community.
17 Or harbors are the largest in the state. The harbor
18 staff operates at city expense. There are two major
19 and several smaller salmon processing businesses
20 operating here as well as a public cold storage on
21 city property.

22 Recently the city of Sitka contributed
23 \$400,000 to the Medue jie Chinook Project in order to
24 increase the number of king salmon return to the Sitka
25 area.

4

1 Could I get a minute of my friend's time?

2 I know that it is your job to apply
3 protection to the listed stock, but I feel that
4 current restriction on the Chinook catch as agreed to
5 under the Pacific Salmon Treaty will provide increased
6 return to your rivers in future years.

7 This spring 134,000 king salmon returned
8 above the Bonneville Dam. That's the best return you
9 have had since 1977. And a direct result of the new
10 treaty fishing patterns.

11 While your returns are already increasing,
12 we are struggling with the tightest restrictions we

13 have ever had on our fisheries.

14 Under this new treaty agreement at the last
15 year's abundance levels all sports anglers are limited
16 to one fish bag limit, and the trollers are fishing at
17 extremely reduced levels.

18 The Board of Fisheries also adopted a new
19 provision which would allow area closure in order to
20 keep the guided anglers harvest within limits
21 specified by the new treaty and the state allocation
22 policy.

23 Such a closure would affect Sitka or any
24 other community where it was applied, greatly. We are
25 facing real hardships and uncertainty in the conduct

5

1 of our king salmon fisheries under the existing
2 regulations as they are currently being applied. Any
3 more reduction will be very deeply felt.

4 In the last ten years southeast trollers
5 incomes for Chinooks have dropped 70 percent, from
6 12.5 million to 3.7 million.

7 When you understand that 400 power troll
8 permit holders, over half the trollers that fished in

9 the entire southeast region last year deliver here in
10 Sitka, you can quickly appreciate how the health of
11 the fishery affects this community.

12 I've got a lot more to say, but, if you
13 could just imagine southeastern Alaska as part of your
14 own community, because you come from large towns, and
15 I talked to you earlier tonight, and it's no different
16 than being in the University District or something,
17 trying to protect your neighborhood. Because I view
18 southeastern Alaska as a whole region, as just a big
19 neighborhood.

20 You know, when I try to explain it to my
21 friends down south, I say southeastern Alaska is not a
22 place, it's a state of mind, because we all protect
23 one another up here. And it's very important, and the
24 fisheries are very important to everybody in this
25 area.

6

1 And I thank you for your time and I hope
2 you make the right decision.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
5 much.

6 Denton Pierson, if you would like to come
7 up, and Ray Nielson, Jr., are you here? Okay.

8 You will be up next, Ray.

9 MR. DENTON PIERSON: Thank you. My
10 name is Denton Pierson. I am a member of the city of
11 bureau assembly. However, I am not here as a
12 representative of the city or the assembly, because we
13 have not voted on this issue.

14 But what I can tell you from personal
15 experience is that I went to college in Oregon in
16 1975.

17 We knew about the problem of nitrogen
18 super-saturation on the Columbia River stocks 25 years
19 ago. And yet here we are, year 2000, and we still
20 don't have a solution for it.

21 The problem with those fish is essentially
22 an Oregon, Washington, and California problem.

23 It didn't escape my attention that when the
24 tower went down on New Year's Eve out in Eastern
25 Oregon, Burbank went dark. This is an Oregon,

7

1 Washington, California problem. You need to fashion

2 an Oregon, Washington, and California solution. You
3 don't need to take it out of the hides of commercial
4 fishermen, sports fishermen, and subsistence users
5 that have made use of these stocks up here long before
6 these damages were ever built.

7 So, you should be looking at solutions down
8 south, not up here. Don't take it out of the hides of
9 our users here.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
12 Denton.

13 Ray Nielson. Are there any other elected
14 officials in the room that I should know about? Okay.

15 MR. RAY NIELSON: Thank you. Welcome
16 to Sitka. My name is Ray Nielson, Jr. I am the
17 secretary for Alaska Native Brotherhood Camp Number 1.
18 I also sit on the A and B Subsistence Committee, Sitka
19 tribal of Alaska, customary traditional committee, and
20 I hold a subsistence seat on the advisory committee.
21 I am a member of the Sitka tribe.

22 And to all citizens of Sitka, we are
23 designated subsistence users under the federal
24 scenario. Native and nonnative alike.

25 So I speak for both sides. Because Sitka

1 is designated rural community. And it is in our best
2 interests to support the dam removal.

3 Subsistence is putting food on the table.
4 Customary, traditional encompasses food, plus our
5 practices and our uses. Regardless of which user
6 group we are a part of, we want to see that the wild
7 stocks of the Snake River continue to thrive.

8 When we go fishing, you know, we cannot
9 target any particular species. We are out there to
10 catch fish, put food on our table.

11 The endangered and threatened species both
12 are a significant danger to awful us.

13 Sooner or later it is going to impact us.
14 We are not the problem, whether we are sportsman or
15 commercial fishermen.

16 Now, this is important to us. We have been
17 harvesting, harvesting the fish, taking it home to
18 eat.

19 Many of our people became commercial
20 fishermen.

21 Now we urge you to listen to our testimony
22 and put it in the books, that we are here, we are not
23 the problem, but we would like to be part of the
24 solution.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Okay. Thank
2 you, Ray.

3 And thank you to our elected officials for
4 running out on the City Council and coming to join us
5 here tonight.

6 At this point what I'd like to do, I've got
7 a couple of questions here for the Panel.

8 (Questions were asked and answered).

9 MR. PETER ESQUIRE: My name is Pete
10 Esquire, which culture association, General Manager,
11 located here in Sitka.

12 We are a nonprofit salmon enhancement
13 organization that was created about 20 years ago by
14 the commercial salmon fishermen, fishing in northern
15 and southeastern Alaska.

16 For those of you who don't know, every
17 fisherman in this room has supported this organization
18 with 3 percent of their total gross value of your
19 catch for the last 20 years.

20 About 10 to 12 years ago when we, whenever,
21 you know, the treaty talks began and Alaska fisherman

22 started being called upon to have their catches
23 reduced for various reasons, we thought, up in our
24 Board of Directors, decided that we had better start
25 getting into the act of producing more king salmon as

10

1 well as other species of salmon for our fishermen to
2 continue to catch.

3 The fishermen in southeast Alaska here
4 cannot afford for you to even be thinking about the
5 option of reducing the Chinook catch in southeast
6 Alaska anymore.

7 We have virtually invested millions of
8 dollars of every fisherman's money here, building
9 hatcheries, building projects and programs that
10 produce Chinook salmon for us to catch in near
11 terminal zones.

12 Obviously we can't catch all of the fish
13 that we produce right at the -- right in front of the
14 hatchery doors, but we need to be looking for these
15 routes that these salmon are taking on the way back to
16 the hatchery so that the fishermen can have the
17 opportunity to catch them.

18 If the fishermen of Alaska here in

19 southeast are to take another cut in their quota, it
20 would virtually leave us no fish available to catch
21 while trying to access even the fish that we have
22 produced at our expense.

23 So I would hope that, now, this is really
24 not an option that you take seriously. I may be
25 missing something, but it seems to me that there's a

11

1 very common sense way of approaching this. If 80
2 percent of the problem of fish survival is, you know,
3 down there with the dams, then they should be
4 responsible for 80 percent of the solution. Not us up
5 here that is, what is that percentage, .02 percent?
6 That's our responsibility. And I think we have more
7 than fulfilled that here in Alaska.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
10 Pete.

11 Steve, is it Refenstuhl?

12 MR. STEVE REFENSTUHL: Refenstuhl.
13 You wouldn't have done any better if I would have
14 printed.

15 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Okay. Great.

16 So Steve, you are going to be followed by Steve
17 Ramp, and then followed by Eric Jordan, I believe it
18 is.

19 MR. STEVE REFENSTUHL: My name is
20 Steve Refenstuhl and I am representing an organization
21 out of Astoria, Oregon.

22 We are an organization consisting of
23 Columbia River public fishermen from all five zones.
24 Fish processors and market consumers and the general
25 public.

12

1 Our three fold purpose has remained
2 constant for decades, and all issues surrounding
3 salmon including recovery and stewardship. We take
4 active advocacy roles in legislative and agency
5 fishery deliberations.

6 We are pledged to ensure the continued
7 livelihood of the Columbia River and its responsible
8 use between treaty native nations, recreational
9 fishermen and commercial interests.

10 The current debate regarding how best to
11 recover endangered runs of Snake River salmon stocks

12 has galvanized opinions along the entire length of the
13 majestic Columbia. Certainly future impacts to
14 stakeholders in the eastern basin wishes to support
15 fair minded and equitable resolution in the spirit of
16 cooperation and compassion.

17 Our members know all too well the
18 devastating impacts brought about to families and
19 communities when short-sighted political decisions and
20 broken promises are imposed upon any segment of the
21 river's people.

22 As we reflect upon the debates that
23 occurred during the public and political process prior
24 to the construction of the four Snake River dams, it
25 is clear that salmon for all remain largely silent.

13

1 We had accumulated wisdom of the
2 controlling fishery agencies would somehow be able to
3 protect upriver salmon during in-stream migration
4 despite the devastating effect of the dams. We relied
5 upon the opinions that failed to take into account the
6 issues such as thermal degradation, in spite of our
7 knowledge that these animals depend upon very specific

8 temperature range to prosper.

9 Upon release of the all H documents,
10 harvest feature with the equal weight as hydro,
11 habitat, and hatchery practices.

12 After all, the fishery community, tribal,
13 public and private has been so heavily restricted and
14 controlled that it should be obvious to the least the
15 informed observer that the harvest approach without
16 further action in other areas is simply inadequate to
17 base the dam induced fish mortality.

18 In practical terms, focused on harvest is
19 the only H that has been implemented and tested.

20 The Tribes know this. The fishery industry
21 knows this. The Corps of Engineers and the NMFS would
22 be disingenuous to deny the obvious. Salmon for all
23 offers its sport to this community will be asked to
24 make sacrifice to save salmon through the best option
25 that currently exists. That is, breaching the four

14

1 specified Snake River dams.

2 And the common purpose of the healthy
3 harvest of all, it is unconscionable to do nothing, or
4 to delay implementation of the best available strategy

5 to return upriver salmon to sustainable levels.

6 We will support programs at public expense
7 to mitigate impact on the people of the eastern basin
8 caused by the dam breaching.

9 Thank you very much.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
11 very much, Steve.

12 Steve Ramp, followed by Eric Jordan,
13 followed by Bill Paden.

14 MR. STEVE Ramp: Good evening. My
15 name is Steve Ramp and I'm here to talk about the
16 federal Caucus All-H paper.

17 I'm not here representing commercial
18 trollers and I don't represent a charter organization.
19 I'm just a Sitka resident who enjoys going out and
20 sport fishing for kings with my friends and family.

21 I counted six times this evening that the
22 panel stated there were no proposals on the table for
23 harvest reductions in southeast Alaska.

24 I counted another six times that the panel
25 stated that harvest reductions in southeast Alaska are

1 one of the options that you are considering in your
2 study.

3 Let's not mince our words, whether it's an
4 official proposal or an item under consideration.

5 If you weren't considering harvest
6 reductions here, you wouldn't be here getting our
7 comment.

8 It's the dams on the river that are killing
9 the salmon.

10 Alaskans have paid more than their share of
11 dues over the years for these fish.

12 And I'd like to share an analogy for you to
13 ponder. Let's imagine if you had a blocked artery in
14 your heart that was making it difficult for blood to
15 travel upstream to your brain. You go to two
16 different doctors for opinions on how to fix your
17 medical problem.

18 The first says to fix the problem, you must
19 operate on your heart and remove the blockage in the
20 artery.

21 The second one says that since your blood
22 travels all over your body and a few of your blood
23 cells do get stuck in your little toe, he wants to fix
24 your problem by cutting off that toe.

25 Which doctor do you want operating on you?

1 Thank you.

2 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
3 Steve.

4 Eric Jordan, followed by Bill Patton,
5 followed by Deborah Lyons. Eric? Oh. I'm sorry.

6 MR. ERIC JORDAN: My name is Eric
7 Jordan. And I really want to thank you for coming,
8 and I really appreciate the exceptional ties that you
9 have there.

10 First I'm a life-long Alaska resident. I
11 have a resolution from a group I work for I'd like to
12 read real quick and then make a couple personal
13 comments.

14 A resolution supporting partial removal of
15 the four Lower Snake River dams.

16 Whereas the mission of the Alaska Marine
17 Conservation Council is to protect the health and
18 diversity of our marine ecosystem;

19 and whereas habitat is a primary objective
20 of the Alaska Marine Conservation Council,

21 and whereas the Snake River salmon habitat
22 is a crucial part of the Chinook salmon,

23 and whereas since 1981 Chinook salmon
24 harvest in southeast Alaska has been reduced to

25 protect the health of salmon runs adversely affected

17

1 by dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers,

2 and whereas scientific data indicates
3 southeast Alaska fisheries are responsible for only
4 one quarter of 1 percent of the total mortality of the
5 Snake River fall Chinook,

6 and whereas scientists estimate up to 95
7 percent of the mortality of the threatened Snake River
8 fall Chinook occurs at dams on the Snake and Columbia
9 River,

10 and whereas the diverse membership of the
11 Alaska Marine Conservation Council, many of whom are
12 right here in this room, all share a common interest
13 in assuring a long-term abundance of wild salmon,

14 and whereas the Alaska Marine Conservation
15 Council joined with the Alaska Governor Tony Knowles
16 in calling for commitment to save passage of salmon to
17 and from their spawning habitat in the rivers of the
18 Pacific Northwest, Canada and Alaska,

19 now therefore it be resolved that the
20 Alaska Marine Conservation Council in order to protect

21 wild salmon and support Alaskan fishermen, supports
22 the partial removal of the Ice Harbor, Lower
23 Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite dams on
24 the Snake River. The fish is our chairman.

25 Speaking personally, I want you to look at

18

1 those pictures that I gave to you. And the reason I
2 brought those is to convey the joy that pursuing king
3 salmon and these magnificent wonderful creatures bring
4 to us, and also to communicate that what you're doing
5 here with all your economics and a lot, even though
6 you're trying to be sincere, our obvicating the issue
7 here.

8 This is not an economic issue. This is
9 largely a spiritual issue. Whether we as humans are
10 going to make the tough decisions, now that we have
11 learned that we have made mistakes with our
12 technology, and have destroyed the habitat of those,
13 that great species, are we going to make the tough
14 decisions, the spiritual decisions to share the earth
15 with them?

16 Take out the dams. Change your habits.
17 Reduce your power consumption in the Northwest.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
20 Eric.

21 Bill Paden, followed by Deborah Lyons,
22 followed by Bert Bergman.

23 MR. BILL PADEN: Good evening. For
24 the record I'm Bill Paden, and I have lived in Sitka
25 for 35 years. I'm a salmon troller and a board member

19

1 of the Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture
2 Association, and I'm also chairman of the Sitka Fish
3 and Game Advisory Committee.

4 Tonight however I'm testifying for myself
5 and for my family.

6 I am married to an Alaskan native and we
7 have two children and four grandchildren living here
8 in Sitka.

9 We have fished for salmon most of those 35
10 years, both commercial and sport, and also
11 subsistence.

12 I'm amazed that additional cuts could be
13 considered for the southeast Alaskan trollers. We

14 have already lost months of our general salmon season.
15 We have lost large areas of our coast due to perceived
16 high Chinook abundance. And have had severe cuts in
17 the number of Chinook retention days so that now we
18 count our summer Chinook season in days as opposed to
19 weeks, whereas in the past months.

20 The southeast troller catches a very small
21 number of Snake River Chinooks. Any more cuts to our
22 harvest of Chinooks will make it difficult, if not
23 impossible, to continue trolling as a family business
24 and as a way of life.

25 I see this as a Northwest regional problem,

20

1 where we as southeast trollers have little more to
2 offer to solve the habitat and dam problems of the
3 Columbia and the Snake require drainages.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
6 very much, Bill, and sorry for mispronouncing your
7 name.

8 Deborah Lyons, followed by Bert Bergman,
9 followed by Rich Davis.

10 MS. DEBORAH LYONS: I have some

11 overheads. Do you want me to go later, at a break?

12 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Yes. Bert
13 Bergman, followed by Rich Davis, followed by Amy
14 Skilbred.

15 MR. BERT BERGMAN: Hello. My name is
16 Bert Bergman.

17 I would first like to thank you guys for
18 coming to Sitka, and I was wondering, you guys must be
19 the guys that drew the small straws to come to Alaska.

20 I'm a commercial troller in southeast
21 Alaska. I'm also a member of a seafood producers
22 cooperative, one of the largest fishing co-ops in
23 operation on the West Coast. We have a plant here in
24 Sitka. We have about 350 individual fishermen that
25 are trollers that are members of our plant. And we

21

1 have a big impact on the local economy in the region.

2 I'm also a family fishermen. I have had
3 four generations of Bergmans that have been trolling.
4 And our roots actually are out of Ilwaco, Washington,
5 which for those of you who know, it is at the mouth of
6 the Columbia River.

7 So this issue is not an entirely new one to
8 me. It's actually been in our household for all four
9 generations, since they started building dams on the
10 Columbia River. And I would try to imagine the amount
11 of times that our family has been in these particular
12 hearings about will the dams jeopardize fishing.

13 And there was the question back in the '40s
14 when they first started building them. And at the
15 time everybody's impression was, and what the
16 biologist came down and told everybody, these dams are
17 going to be no problem. The fish are going to come
18 back every year and it's just going to be like you
19 wouldn't believe it, we are going to have hatcheries
20 and the fish are going to go on for ever.

21 Now here we are in the year 2000, we have
22 suddenly discovered like, whoops, they might go
23 extinct, and it's kind of like wake up, it's been
24 going on for a long time.

25 And I think you've got a little bit of

22

1 regional flavor here already, about what this fishery
2 means to our economy.

3 And Pete Esquire made some good points

4 about how we use our king salmon in the summer to
5 harvest our legitimate Alaska king salmon and/or
6 regional coho fishery, which is primarily local
7 stocks.

8 And this is an important part of our
9 fishery because, now, it helps deal with the mortality
10 problem.

11 You kind of asked us to speak to the
12 regional aspect of the problem. I think that's kind
13 of what is really at the heart of the matter here,
14 because when you add up the effects of the jetties and
15 the sand bars with birds on them that come from out of
16 state and by diking up the sides of the river that you
17 can make farm fields out of them and then reducing the
18 genetic diversity and then how is that going to, how
19 are you going to have a base that's going to last
20 through poor ocean cycles, which has happened down in
21 Oregon and Washington for the last 20 years.

22 We have seen marlin off the coast. I
23 really don't think it's going to happen myself
24 personally. I think it's kind of like pie in the sky.

25 But if you were going to try to do

1 something for the Snake River fish, you are going to
2 have to take out those dams, because no other solution
3 is going to come close to it. And it is going to be
4 hard for the region to face up with, because for the
5 most part they are all hydro junkies and dependent
6 upon where the money comes from, you know, and
7 obviously we are going to speak with the same bang up
8 here.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks, Bert.

11 Rich Davis, followed by Amy Skilbred,
12 followed by Ralph Guthrie.

13 MR. RICH DAVIS: Members of the
14 Federal Caucus, welcome. I am Rich Davis. I am a 35
15 year resident of Juneau, Alaska.

16 I have been a salmon fisherman for the past
17 32 years. Depending on which of these 32 years you
18 look at, one-third to one-half of my annual income was
19 coming from the king salmon.

20 My wife, three children and I depend
21 completely on fishing income. My wife and oldest son
22 are licensed to work in Alaska's commercial fishermen.
23 One in 20 Alaskans is licensed for hands on commercial
24 fishing industry involvement.

25 Numbers approach one in ten for coastal

1 communities of Alaska, like Sitka, Ketchikan and
2 Juneau.

3 It is my sincere hope that your caucus will
4 not initiate efforts to reduce Alaska's king salmon
5 harvest. Snake River fall king salmon are only
6 one-half of one-tenth of 1 percent of this region's
7 king salmon harvest.

8 The alteration of any of this region's
9 fisheries will result in social and economic turmoil
10 for us. And next to no net savings of Snake River
11 fall kings.

12 Solution to preservation of Snake River
13 fall run king salmon lies solely in the restoration of
14 spawning and referring habitat, ensuring passage for
15 migration to sea and removal of nonindigenous
16 predatory fish species from the river that must serve
17 as the incubator and nursery for the endangered
18 kings.

19 The salmon producing capacity of the
20 Columbia River waters were forsaken years ago in favor
21 of industrial development. Unless the effects of the
22 drastic waterway alterations and chronic habitat
23 degradation are reversed, there is no way in our mind

24 that Snake River fall king numbers can ever be
25 sustained.

25

1 Please do not presume that changes to
2 Alaska's king salmon fisheries will yield you any
3 component necessary for recovery of endangered Snake
4 River kings.

5 I recommend you preserve their DNA and
6 store it.

7 Sadly, the continuing lack of efforts
8 toward river restoration may have already doomed these
9 salmon.

10 Please hurry back to Washington, Idaho, and
11 Oregon, and get busy.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
14 Rich.

15 Amy Skilbred, followed by Ralph Guthrie,
16 followed by Bill Foster.

17 MR. AMY SKILBRED: Hi. Good evening.
18 My name is Amy Skilbred and I am representing the
19 Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

20 Welcome to Alaska and thank you for the
21 opportunity to comment here and in the other three
22 towns that you are visiting.

23 Fish and Game fully supports the fishermen
24 and fishing communities of southeast Alaska and
25 believes that they make significant sacrifices for

26

1 Snake River fall Chinook recovery.

2 We have reviewed the federal documents and
3 have the following comments.

4 On the John Day drawdown, Fish and Game
5 reviewed the summary and arrived at a very different
6 conclusion than the Corps.

7 We believe Phase II should be undertaken,
8 that the Corps has greatly underestimated the possible
9 benefits of a drawdown. Fish and Game biologists
10 believe benefits could be significant enough to delist
11 the Snake River fall Chinook.

12 We also further request an extension of the
13 comment deadline because the study is not yet
14 available.

15 Second, as to the Corps' DEIS on the Lower
16 Snake River. Fish and Game, based on its review of

17 the documents, the Corps' own assessment, and the U.S.
18 Fish and Wildlife Service recommendations, believes
19 that the alternative that will provide the most
20 benefits for endangered salmon and offer the best
21 chance to restore fish populations is the natural
22 river drawdown, establishing a river ecosystem.

23 As for the technical fix alternatives, the
24 study shows that after 20 years of transport, the
25 transportation has not worked sufficiently and also I

27

1 think the Corps itself said that adding more
2 transportation is not likely to do a lot because we
3 are already transporting a lot of the fish.

4 For the 4-H paper, Fish and Game agrees
5 with the concept that harvest, hydropower facilities,
6 habitat restoration, and hatcheries, all have a role
7 to play in recovery of the Columbia and Snake River
8 salmon.

9 Alternative B, the harvest reductions
10 alternative, however, will not recover Snake River
11 salmon, but would greatly affect all southeast Alaska
12 fishermen, commercial, charter and sport.

13 Under the alternatives, the harvest could
14 be cut from 50 to 75 percent, but fall Chinook will
15 not recover and this will do nothing for spring,
16 summer Chinook, steelhead or Sockeye, where harvest
17 rates are already negligible.

18 Fish and Game manages fisheries in Alaska
19 as to assure the long term health of the fish
20 populations, the people of Alaska expect us, in fact
21 we depend on it.

22 We take this responsibility seriously. If
23 we believe that any reasonable additional conservation
24 measures by the Department of Fish and Game were
25 wanted to ensure the recovery of Snake River fall

28

1 Chinook, we would step forward to help.

2 Fish and Game's position regarding the
3 recovery of Snake River salmon is clear. Alaska's
4 fishermen are already doing their part. NMFS agrees
5 that the scientifically harvest reductions put in
6 place with the 1999 Pacific salmon treaty agreements
7 are sufficient.

8 Furthermore Fish and Game back scientific
9 findings demonstrating that the best option for

10 recovery of Snake River salmon includes removing the
11 earthen portions of the four lower Snake dams and
12 restoring habitat and increasing water flow.

13 We do stand by our statement in the mailer
14 saying that 50 to 75 percent is being looked at,
15 whether you call it an opening, a proposal, an
16 alternative, it's being analyzed and looked at.

17 So thank you.

18 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
19 much, Amy.

20 Ralph Guthrie, followed by Bill Foster,
21 followed by R. W., I believe it is Cranston or
22 Cransten.

23 And just a reminder, if you've got written
24 comments that we can include with the oral testimony,
25 we'd really like to do that.

29

1 MR. RALPH GUTHRIE: Good evening. My
2 name is Ralph Guthrie. I have been fishing since
3 1941. When I was six years old, I went out with my
4 grandfather, and I have been on boats ever since, been
5 trolling since 1961 right after I got out of service.

6 I did this, there are some poems, a prayer,
7 and each of you guys should read that prayer, because
8 it has to do with how people should be looking at the
9 spiritual aspect of the salmon that has been so
10 important on the West Coast of the United States for
11 as many thousands of years as people have been on the
12 coast and clear to the Midland, Montana, the Sioux
13 would come on their horses to do salmon on that river.

14 One problem I really have is the dams
15 because the man that founded the Sierra Club and the
16 man that founded the Water Conservation Act debated
17 what would happen to the salmon, and the man in the
18 Sierra Club said, what are you going to do with these
19 fish?

20 You guys all know what happened to the
21 fish. But that water became so precious for dust
22 farms to raise potatoes on, that there was no
23 consideration for the longevity of a very beautiful
24 miracle on your river.

25 So I'm in favor of taking those dams out.

30

1 But without the rearing areas, that water is going to
2 be pretty hard for survival.

3 Five years down the line you're going to
4 get some rearing area, how are you going to get the
5 fish there?

6 The other part, I was down at East Bay
7 hatchery and they were releasing fish, they call them
8 zeros. That they were dumping them in the bay before
9 they were ready to go into the bay.

10 And that's what your transporting system
11 looks to me that is happening, where the survival rate
12 is down. Those fish need to swim down that river and
13 be ready for each phase of the river, and you're not
14 giving it to them.

15 I would like to see you remove all the
16 dams, but that's not going to happen. But that's
17 where I'm at.

18 Thank you, and I hope that your decision
19 remembers the salmon.

20 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
21 very much, Ralph.

22 Bill Foster, followed by R. W. Cranston, I
23 think it is, followed by Keith Nyitray.

24 MR. BILL FOSTER: Thank you very much
25 for coming to Sitka. If you are a first time visitor,

1 I hope you come back and see it on a really nice day
2 sometime.

3 Anyway, 23 year Sitka resident, now retired
4 after 10 years in the guided sport fishery. I would
5 rather use restoring those four dams than breaching
6 them. For some reason that sounds better.

7 Anyway, I'm in favor of retiring the four
8 dams.

9 But what I really want to talk to you about
10 tonight is Pacific Salmon Treaty.

11 Since 1991 I have been involved in the
12 treaty, representing recreational fishing on the
13 Alaska northern panel.

14 I don't know where you were on January the
15 20th, 1994, but I know where I was. I was in a dingy
16 conference room at the Sea-Tac airport Hilton, and at
17 that time there was a small group of Canadians and
18 U.S. representatives talking about Chinook salmon.

19 At about one o'clock in the afternoon the
20 Canadians got a call from the home office in Vancouver
21 and walked out. They also stood us up the next week
22 in Portland.

23 The reason I mention that is since that
24 time, for the last six years, and Larry's very
25 familiar with this, we have met for hundreds and

1 hundreds of hours, and just last year recently we
2 finally came up with an agreement.

3 And I guess the way I feel is, for working
4 for six years to come up with an agreement, finally
5 based on abundance, that tinkering with the U.S.
6 harvest at this time is just unacceptable.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
9 Bill.

10 R. W. Cranston, followed by Keith Nyitray,
11 followed by Elden Saultman, I think it is. Cranston?

12 All right. Keith, are you here?

13 MR. KEITH NYITRAY: No need for the
14 bell. I've got it right at three minutes.

15 Good evening. My name is Keith Nyitray and
16 I am here to speak in favor of habitat restoration and
17 dam removal in the Pacific Northwest to rebuild
18 endangered salmon and steelhead stocks.

19 I have a degree in environmental resources
20 management, and over the years none of the past issues
21 have ever threatened so many Alaskan residents to such
22 a direct degree as the possible proposals to cut

23 southeast Chinook harvests by 50 to 70 percent for a
24 period of up to ten years.

25 The listing of the Pacific Northwest salmon

33

1 and steelhead stocks under the ESA was an action I
2 loudly applauded. However overdue that action may be,
3 it is still better late than never.

4 Fortunately, scientific study, one agency
5 finding after another, has determined the
6 overwhelmingly main cause for the drastic decline in
7 the region's salmon stocks have been damaged,
8 reservoirs and habitat loss.

9 Scientifically the solution to the problem
10 is easy. Tear down the dams and take better care of
11 the region's habitat. It's the political solution
12 that scares the urine out of me.

13 I stress that over the past several decades
14 the people and industries of the Columbia, Snake River
15 Basin have enjoyed the economic benefits of massive
16 timber harvesting, federal dam construction projects,
17 cheaper electricity and cheaper transportation costs.

18 As the economy boomed and the salmon stocks

19 declined, it was easier for the regional managers to
20 finger the blame elsewhere, to the commercial salmon
21 fishery.

22 Since the 1970s Alaska has continually
23 shouldered the economic burden, a loss of hundreds of
24 millions of dollars, to an ever increasingly
25 restricted fishery.

34

1 It's time for the people in the region who
2 caused the problem to shoulder the burden for fishing
3 it.

4 Tear down the dams.

5 Various studies indicate that the
6 hydropower dams are responsible for 80 or more
7 percentage of the downstream and upstream salmon
8 mortality, whereas the same studies indicate that less
9 than one-quarter of 1 percent of migrating Snake River
10 fall run Chinook salmon are caught in southeast Alaska
11 waters.

12 Restoring the salmon runs is a scientific
13 no brainer.

14 Tear down the dams.

15 The economic cost of removing those dams is

16 a cost that would be borne by millions of the region's
17 residents, residents who have been enjoying the
18 benefits of those dams for decades. To a few tens of
19 dollars per person. Whereas the cost of putting
20 southeast Chinook harvest would be borne by relatively
21 few Alaskans living and fishing in southeast and who
22 have never benefited from those dams.

23 Such a cost would result in numerous
24 fishermen, tourism operators and businesses being
25 forced into economic hardship or out of business

35

1 entirely.

2 Where is the fairness there? It's all too
3 easy to make a decision which would adversely impact
4 Alaskans as opposed to the powerful voting
5 constituents of the Northwest.

6 I am afraid that the Bonneville Power
7 Administration will be against dam removals as an act
8 of self-justification, an inability to share the
9 burden.

10 Even though Alaska's fisherman have
11 continually borne the burden of trade-offs under the

12 past and present salmon treaties, we will once again
13 be put out for dry for the mismanagement of another
14 region.

15 I ask you to fix the problem where it lies.
16 Tear down those dams.

17 Thank you.

18 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
19 much, Pete.

20 Elden Saultman, followed by Paula Terrel,
21 followed by Robert Schell.

22 Elden, are you here?

23 All right. Paula Terrel, followed by
24 Robert Schell, followed by Kris, I think it is
25 Balliet.

36

1 MS. PAUL TERREL: You caught me a
2 little bit off guard. I didn't expect my name to be
3 called this soon.

4 My name is Paula Terrel. I am a troller.
5 I have been a troller for 22 years in southeast
6 Alaska.

7 I am addressing, I guess just start from
8 the top, I am supporting the breaching of the four

9 Snake River dams, and I am also asking that there be
10 no further reductions in our salmon fishery up here.

11 And as somebody also said, there is no, I
12 don't care whether you call it a proposal or an
13 option, on page 50 of the harvest of this
14 conservation, it deals with possibly a 50 to 75
15 percent cut in our fisheries.

16 So I don't care what you call it, we are
17 going to be impacted in that happens.

18 Something that hasn't really be addressed
19 is we have taken cuts, trollers, we have taken cuts,
20 we have taken a lot of cuts over the last 20 years
21 actually. But especially since the salmon treaty has
22 come into effect.

23 We are not taking the cuts because, you
24 know, there's a problem here. We are taking the cuts
25 because of what is happening with the Snake River fall

37

1 Chinook run.

2 We are supportive of conservation efforts.
3 We are not greedy. We are here to try and help as
4 much as we can, and so we have taken cuts, we have

5 limited entry, we took a full cap of I think 300,000
6 fish in 1980, we have got the salmon treaty, and in
7 1999 with the new treaty agreement, we have now taken
8 some more cuts.

9 We have been told that the intent was that
10 under the ESA, if there were more cuts required, they
11 would not penalize Alaska. So we can't take any more.

12 I recognize that there are a lot of people
13 in the lower 48 who are very concerned about what dam
14 breaching would do. And I understand that.

15 Whether it's real or perceived, I'm not
16 concerned with that. It is a problem.

17 But the dams are a problem. And I guess
18 what I'm saying to you is, the federal government
19 created them, breach the dams, and if it requires
20 mitigating, either with money or with other ways of
21 helping people in the lower 48 that might be hurt,
22 then do it.

23 But don't come to us for it. But do help
24 them, because if they need it, they should have it.

25 We're not out to put the burden on anybody

1 else's back.

2 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

3 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
4 much, Paula.

5 Robert Schell, followed by Kris Balliet,
6 followed by David Turcott.

7 MR. ROBERT SCHELL: My name is Bob
8 Schell. I have been a commercial troller since 1967,
9 and member of seafood producers cooperative since
10 1972.

11 I am here to testify as both an individual
12 and as board chairman of SPC. Our cooperative has 372
13 members holding Alaska power troll permits.

14 In 1980 Alaska trollers received their
15 first federally imposed quota from NMFS of a little
16 over 300,000 king salmon.

17 We were told at that time that if we
18 sacrifice now, that in three cycles we would be
19 fishing an additional 100,000 king salmon. We should
20 have been at a 400,000-plus level in 1992.

21 What we have today is a quota of
22 approximately 100,000 fish less than the original
23 quota.

24 Our conservation over the past 20 years has
25 resulted in no stock rebuilding the lower 48 king

1 salmon runs that we were told would benefit from our
2 reduction in harvest.

3 Further reductions in Alaska will produce
4 the same results.

5 In 1980 the members of Seafood Producers
6 Cooperative saw the completion of a cooperative cold
7 storage plant in Sitka. This undertaking resulted in
8 personal financial sacrifice for each member. This
9 investment was based on the production of troll king
10 and Coho salmon.

11 The production of king salmon into our
12 cooperative has declined significantly since this
13 plant was built, despite the fact that our membership
14 has tripled.

15 The federal promise of increased king
16 salmon catch opportunities has not materialized. And
17 the viability of many members small business
18 opportunities has been placed in jeopardy.

19 The statistics speak for themselves. The
20 billions of dollars spent on the Columbia River salmon
21 have produced no results.

22 The reason for the failure of past
23 practices is well documented. The only way the
24 upriver stocks are going to increase and not continue

25 to decline is spelled out in your own research.

40

1 Partial dam breaching with increased water
2 flow and restoration of habitat are the only
3 solutions. Any action less than this is merely repeat
4 of past failures and the visiting of hardship upon
5 those who have had minimal effect on the stock
6 decimation.

7 Alaska's sport and commercial fishermen
8 have done their part. Go back home and implement
9 those measures that have been documented as having
10 positive outcomes for these upriver fish.

11 Thanks for your time, and for coming to
12 Alaska so we can be heard.

13 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
14 very much, Bob.

15 Kris Balliet, followed by David Turcott,
16 followed by Mark Moats, followed by a break.

17 MS. KRIS BALLIET: Hello. My name is
18 Kris Balliet. I am the Alaska regional director for
19 the Center for Marine Conservation. Center for Marine
20 Conservation has regional offices throughout the
21 coastal United States, and Alaska is our newest

22 office, being 18 months old.

23 We have 120,000 members throughout the
24 U.S., almost 1,000 of those members here in Alaska.
25 Center for Marine Conservation joins 700 other

41

1 national and regional organizations in endorsing and
2 encouraging you to remove those dams. Those dams
3 don't make sense.

4 The Center for Marine Conservation's
5 mission is healthy wild oceans filled be abundant
6 life. That includes adult salmon.

7 Here in Alaska the science backs us up when
8 we say our fishermen are not overfishing those salmon.
9 It's those dams and your science says so.

10 The problem is the dams, and only through
11 removing those four lower Snake dams will these salmon
12 recover the health harvestable levels and historic
13 abundance.

14 The 700 other regional and Alaska and
15 national organizations include Alaska Marine
16 Conservation Council, the Center for Marine
17 Conservation, Alaska Trollers, National Wildlife

18 Federation, Trout Unlimited, American Rivers,
19 Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, Columbia River
20 Intertribal Fish Commission, Alaska Center for the
21 Environment, Alaska Long Line Fishermen Association,
22 linn canal conservation, Midnight Sun Chapter of Trout
23 Unlimited, Tongass Sport Fishing Association, Earth
24 Justice Legal Defense, Federation of Fly Fishers, The
25 Mountaineers, Natural Resource Defense Council,

42

1 Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, Northwest Sport Fishing
2 Industry Association, Pacific Coast Federation of
3 Fishermens Association, Pacific Rivers Council, Save
4 Our Wild Salmon, Taxpayers for Common Sense,
5 Washington Trollers.

6 The list goes on and on. Thousands of
7 people are saying, those dams don't make sense. We
8 need you to take them out.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
11 very much, Kris.

12 David Turcott, followed by Mark Moats.

13 MR. DAVID TURCOTT: My name is Dave
14 Turcott, and I apologize, I only represent myself at

15 this moment.

16 I want to thank you for including southeast
17 Alaska in the public process of taking testimony
18 concerning the removal of these dams on the Snake
19 River system.

20 I'm a 37 year resident of the state of
21 Alaska. 30 of those years have been spent in
22 southeast Alaska, mostly in Sitka.

23 I have trolled for salmon commercially from
24 Washington to southeast Alaska since 1958.

25 I have been teaching in Sitka since 1970,

43

1 most of that time has been spent teaching marine
2 biology and ocean science at Sheldon Jackson College.

3 I was the organizing president of the
4 Northern Southeast Aquaculture Association and
5 coorganizer of the Alaska Trollers Association.

6 This forum is encouraging because it
7 addresses the issue of habitat restoration as a step
8 toward rebuilding the depressed Chinook salmon
9 population on the Snake River system.

10 The solution to this problem is not backed

11 by any statistical validity. Southeast Alaska
12 trollers have the data to show that a tiny percentage
13 of their catch is comprised of Snake River kings.

14 One calculation even indicates that it
15 takes a troller in southeast Alaska over 40 years to
16 catch one Snake River king salmon.

17 Our troll fishery has taken progressive
18 cutbacks in the king salmon catch over the past 20
19 years to the point where the summer season is limited
20 to only a few days.

21 We in Alaska feel that we have done more
22 than our share to pay for the habitat destruction in
23 the lower 48.

24 Habitat is the key to any organization to
25 succeed. With salmon, the only way their fresh water

44

1 habitat can be effectively restored is on a watershed
2 basis. Dropping the dams on the Snake is a logical
3 first step in this process but the entire Snake
4 watershed will have to be studied if restoration of
5 the area is going to be fully effective.

6 You are on the right track but have a long
7 way to go.

8 Congratulations.

9 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
10 very much, Dave.

11 Mark Moats.

12 MR. MARK MOATS: Howdy. Thanks for
13 bringing the nice weather. And I see you guys have
14 got a Sitka suntan from all of this roasting going
15 on.

16 I am Mark Moats, a power troller here for
17 27 years, and I have got my own axe to grind tonight,
18 not for anybody else.

19 And I guess as a concerned citizen and as a
20 fisherman, it's discouraging to see a real lack of
21 cohesion and unity among all the federal agencies and
22 state agencies in the Columbia River Basin on a
23 concerted king salmon management plan.

24 It's like everybody's going in a different
25 direction and scrapping over little crumbs of the pie.

45

1 Nobody's sitting down and making the pie bigger for
2 everybody. At least that's the way I'm seeing it
3 here.

4 I'd like to see a little more common sense,
5 a little more unity, a little more common ground
6 amongst you guys, all of you guys in the lower 48,
7 Columbia Basin, like let's see if we can cooperate and
8 make a bigger pie to start with, and one of those I
9 would say is getting rid of some of these dams, too.

10 And another one, too, is maybe some sort of
11 practical triage, like let's have a common sense
12 approach, let's save the runs we can save and give up
13 on the stuff we can't, from an economic standpoint.

14 I mean, nobody wants to bring red salmon up
15 to Ketchum Lake in Northern Idaho. But let's
16 concentrate on the lower stuff on the Lower Columbia,
17 lower Snake, where we can.

18 That's all I've got. Thanks, guys.

19 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Okay, Mark.
20 Thank you very much.

21 All right. At this point let's take a ten
22 minute break, get some fresh air.

23 After the break we will start with Debra
24 Lyons. Debra will be followed by Carl Dominicks, and
25 Carl will be followed by Marty Remund.

1 fishery is 332,665. The negotiated ceiling was
2 263,000.

3 That's how we started the treaty that
4 Alaska would keep their catches down to that lower
5 level and help rebuild the stocks.

6 The troll portion of the harvest during
7 that base period, that's our historical average catch.
8 When abundance was at 1, Alaska trollers were
9 harvesting 283,535 fish. And we're going fast.

10 Now, what's happened under the performance
11 of the treaty and under the new letter of agreement
12 management that started in 1997, and under the, that
13 is probably not large enough for you guys in the back
14 to see, under the new '99 agreement, that green bar is
15 the troll portion of the Alaska harvest. The blue bar
16 is the total Alaska harvest.

17 And you can see that in no year other than,
18 say, 1991 and '90 does it get back up to our historic
19 average catch.

20 And I guess I'll jump all the way to the
21 punch line. Three minutes is not very long.

22 What I want you to understand is when we
23 negotiated this agreement, we made real reductions

24 from the letter of agreement. And what we have ended
25 up, are our harvest rate reductions.

48

1 What I want you to look at is when
2 abundance is 1.1, Alaska's fishing at a 52 percent
3 harvest rate reduction. That's under the current
4 treaty management.

5 So your wish for 50 percent reduction,
6 whether it is an option or not, has been satisfied
7 under this treaty agreement.

8 When stocks rebuild, we go up to less of a
9 harvest rate reduction.

10 What I'd like you to notice here, we can
11 increase abundance by 90 percent under this agreement,
12 and we are still reducing our harvest rates by 35
13 percent from our historic averages.

14 So there's more detail on this in my
15 written comments.

16 But that's why we have the attitude, we
17 have given enough, we've given a lot, and we'd like to
18 have our contributions to the health of all of the
19 stocks that swim down the coast recognized.

20 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks very

21 much, Debra.

22 Carl Dominicks, followed by Marty Remund,
23 followed by Sherry Tuttle.

24 MR. CARL DOMINICKS: Hi. My name is
25 Carl Dominicks. I am a fisherman here in Alaska.

49

1 I caught my first king salmon in the
2 Columbia bar in 1963 and I have been chasing them ever
3 since.

4 The thing I found bizarre about this is
5 this fish is found endangered because of the genetics,
6 and the genetics are caused from where it is now or
7 where it's been or how it got there over the years.

8 At one time we were, we were covered with
9 ice here. So all king salmon up and down the coast
10 evidently came from one place.

11 So the king salmon we are catching in
12 Alaska all the way up to Bristow Bay evidently come
13 from the same stock that these valuable genetic fish
14 up in the Snake River came from.

15 The thing that I have never been able to
16 find out is if all the salmon stocks were checked to

17 see if this genetic marker was in any other stock. I
18 mean, they have got stocks clear over to Siberia.

19 It could be, if you checked stocks up in
20 Alaska here, or even over in Siberia, there might be
21 all kinds of fish with this particular marker in it,
22 and it's not endangered at all.

23 If you haven't checked it, how would you
24 know?

25 The other point I'd like to make is that

50

1 you guys that built the dams knew you were going to
2 kill the fish off, so I don't know why you are coming
3 to us about it.

4 The fish, especially king salmon, are
5 voltage sensitive. We are not talking about a whole
6 lot of voltage. Everybody in here knows it. If you
7 have minus voltages on your boats, say, even a minus
8 .5 volts D/C, the fish will just stay away from you.

9 And I have often wondered why they couldn't
10 funnel the fish away from the turbines with some kind
11 of electric grid. You just need it in the water. You
12 could put it in there with buoys and anchors.

13 And the voltage is so low that you probably

14 couldn't even feel it with your tongue anyway, because
15 I am handling the lines all the time with the voltages
16 on.

17 There is always voltage on the lines. If
18 it's positive, the fish come to it. If it's negative,
19 they stay away from it.

20 So maybe this would be a way of funneling
21 the fish rather than putting them in these barges and
22 barging them down, you could funnel them to an area
23 that they would just swim down the river, away from
24 the turbines.

25 Because all you're doing by barging them

51

1 down there, when they got down there, they haven't had
2 a chance to fight off predators, and there's just
3 something down there with their mouth open down there
4 waiting for them when you dump them in the water.

5 That's all I have. Thanks.

6 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
7 Carl.

8 Marty Remund, followed by Sherry, I think
9 it's Tuttle. I think I was saying it wrong earlier.

10 Followed by Foy Nevers.

11 Marty? Marty, are you here?

12 All right. Sherry Tuttle, are you still
13 here. Great. So Sherry is followed by Noy Nevers,
14 followed by Ginny Olney.

15 Ms. SHERRY TUTTLE: Hi. My name is
16 Sherry Tuttle. I live in Sitka and I own and operate
17 a 53 foot freezer troller. I direct market my frozen
18 at sea product.

19 I have been involved in commercial fishing
20 since the mid 1960s and have evolved into my present
21 business in order to make my return of my fishing
22 efforts and in turn return my contribution to the
23 community.

24 My business is now thriving and growing and
25 has a promising future. The only thing that stands in

52

1 my way is politics.

2 Sales of king salmon have comprised
3 approximately 50 percent of my income for the last few
4 years. Any reduction in king salmon harvest will
5 directly affect my going business.

6 Please also remember that limiting our

7 access to king salmon will ultimately limit our access
8 to coho as well.

9 If the dams continue to kill 95 percent of
10 the Snake River fall Chinook and the finger of guilt
11 continues to be pointed at the commercial fishers
12 who impact these fish less than 5 percent, the salmon
13 will become extinct and so will the Alaska troller.

14 In addition the seafood consumer will be
15 denied what has been becoming recognized as the health
16 food of the millennium.

17 I am here to ask you about the future of my
18 business. I have a capital investment of well over
19 \$350,000. My business supports a family of three and
20 employs crew members on a seasonal basis.

21 If the dams remain in place and our fishery
22 dies, is the federal government going to pay my bills?
23 Am I going to be compensated for the sacrifices I have
24 made for the conservation of the Snake River salmon in
25 the past ten years? Is the federal government ever

53

1 going to make good on the promises they made to
2 Alaskans in 1985?

3 When we signed the treaty in 1985 we were
4 assured that our sacrifices would produce an abundance
5 of harvestable salmon by 1998.

6 Over the last 30 years Alaskan trollers
7 have reduced catch and income to conserve Snake and
8 Columbia River stocks.

9 Fish seasons have been reduced from 160 to
10 11 days.

11 It is time to stop the calculated erosion
12 of our fishery and our livelihoods when there is
13 overwhelming evidence that we are not the problem.

14 I believe we need to be biologically
15 responsible for the salmon. The ESA is a good law and
16 should be used to prevent the extinction of the salmon
17 stock.

18 The salmon have moved closer to extinction
19 as have salmon fishers who have been made seen as
20 scapegoats. By beaching these dams you will take a
21 great step towards saving the salmon resource and
22 these fishery dependent southeast Alaskan communities.

23 The federal government needs to save the
24 wild salmon and compensate communities adversely
25 affected in the process.

1 Thank you.

2 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
3 much, Sherry.

4 Noy Nevers, followed by Ginny Olney,
5 followed by Gerry Hope.

6 MR. NOY NEVERS: Good evening and
7 welcome to Sitka by the sea.

8 My comments are for the Federal Register.
9 I live at 2618 Halboth Point Road in Sitka. My name
10 is Noy Nevers. 41 years have been in Sitka.

11 I am an avid king salmon fisherman.

12 Tonight I represent the Sitka Sportsman
13 Association which has a membership of approximately
14 350 avid king salmon fishing members. I serve the
15 association as the director on the Board of Directors.

16 At our February meeting the Sitka sportsman
17 board passed by unanimous vote to help protect wild
18 king salmon runs, the partial removal of the Ice
19 Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Lower
20 Granite dams on the Snake River.

21 I have a side comment. On the subject of
22 bull trout that nobody has talked about yet. Up here
23 we call them dollys. We have lakes that have in
24 excess of a hundred thousand dollys in these lakes,
25 that when the ice goes off, come out to the ocean, and

1 I think that we would be willing to trade you some of
2 those dollys if you would be willing to not take any
3 more of the salmon.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
6 much, Noy.

7 All right. Ginny Olney, followed by Gerry
8 Hope, followed by Mike Blewett.

9 MS. GINNY OLNEY: My name is Ginny
10 Olney, and I have been a salmon troller.

11 Are you hearing a certain unanimity of
12 opinion here?

13 I am feeling a little superfluous. Quoting
14 from the Endangered Species Act, they themselves cite
15 land use and water development issues the primary
16 causes of the demise of salmon.

17 We in Alaska have taken cuts for the last
18 20 years, as you are well aware, and certainly we are.
19 And we haven't managed to save the salmon in the
20 Pacific Northwest.

21 We have, however, up to this date managed
22 to save our own.

23 And so I'm saying that more harvest
24 restrictions in Alaska would be ridiculous. And that
25 we definitely need to concentrate on habitat

56

1 restoration.

2 And it's interesting, the Internet has
3 really changed the way we're doing business, and I
4 think it will continue to do that in the future, and
5 perhaps that means that our need for electrical power
6 will be decreasing over time, and for that reason,
7 along with many others, I really think it's time to
8 breach the dams.

9 Thank you.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
11 Ginny.

12 Gerry Hope, followed by Mike Blewett,
13 followed by Howard Pendell.

14 MR. GERRY HOPE: Good evening. My
15 name is Gerry Hope and I am President of the Alaska
16 Native Brotherhood Camp Number 1, an organization that
17 was established in 1912 and has been in continuous
18 existence through today, and has been successful in
19 endeavors such as the developing an equal rights

20 amendment to the Alaska Constitution.

21 Normally I would try and race through three
22 minutes and crush and cram as many words as I possibly
23 could, but I'm not going to try and do that, although
24 I have testified many times before in different
25 venues.

57

1 I would like to just say, in your own
2 publication, I really appreciate the information of
3 the dwindling stocks. It shows ten to 16 million, and
4 then down to, what, five million, and then one million
5 around now.

6 I can only imagine what the Alaska -- or
7 excuse me, the Tribes in the Columbia River Basin area
8 feel in that dwindling resource of precious food. And
9 their spiritual connection, as we have witnessed the
10 same thing here in Alaska.

11 And you have heard testimony about how
12 different measures were taken to conserve the catches
13 of salmon.

14 None of those have worked.

15 A and B has submitted a resolution by

16 previous person who testified for A and B, Ray
17 Nielson, Jr., regarding resolution we passed, and that
18 is to urge President Clinton to remove the lower four
19 Snake River dams.

20 We believe that this would have a
21 significant positive impact and we really appreciate
22 you taking our testimony here in southeast Alaska.
23 And we would submit more documentation in the required
24 time as identified in your publications.

25 Thank you very much.

58

1 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
2 very much, Gerry.

3 Okay. Mike Blewett, followed by Howard
4 Pendell, followed by Paul Olson.

5 Mike? Howard? Okay. Howard Pendell,
6 followed by Paul Olson, followed by Pat Kehoe.

7 MR. HOWARD PENDELL: My name is
8 Howard Pendell. I have been a commercial fisherman in
9 Alaska for 15 years.

10 I have personal experience in many of the
11 cuts in our catch over the years in a vein effort to
12 save these fish, and now I would like to see you

13 tackle the real problem, the dams.

14 Thank you all for coming to Sitka and
15 listening to us. And thank you for bringing this
16 beautiful weather .

17 As it would happen, the Army Corps of
18 Engineers has recently conducted a study and released
19 the results in what is called the summary of the John
20 Day drawdown phase I study.

21 The John Day reservoir stretches for 80
22 miles. It is considered the most lethal for
23 juveniles. Elevated temperatures, delayed migration
24 time and increased predation all help turn the John
25 Day reservoir into a lake of death.

59

1 The Walleye alone are estimated to consume
2 400,000 juveniles annually in the John Day Reach.

3 Drawdown to natural river condition would
4 turn this death trap into 80 miles of excellent
5 spawning habitat, similar to the Hanford Reach.

6 It seems a reasonable assumption that all
7 salmon stocks on the Columbia and Snake would benefit
8 substantially from this change in configuration.

9 It goes without question that the dams can
10 and do decimate salmon runs.

11 In the case of John Day, the Army Corps of
12 Engineers has decided to defend the position that
13 drawdown does not substantially benefit the listed
14 stocks.

15 The Army Corps goes even further into the
16 realm of unbelievability by stating with the John Day
17 drawdown the Hanford Reach stock would likely decrease
18 in berms.

19 Yes, that's right. Not only did these fish
20 take a major hit when the John Day was built but
21 according to the Corps, will take another when it is
22 removed. Or if it were removed.

23 I would support a Phase II study of the
24 John Day drawdown so the analysis by the Corps could
25 be improved upon.

60

1 I also support the breach of the lower four
2 Snake River dams.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
5 much, Harold.

6 Paul Olson, followed by Pat Kehoe, followed
7 by Stephen Shapp.

8 MR. PAUL OLSON: My name is Paul
9 Olson. I have been a commercial fisherman for 20
10 years. I grew up fishing in Washington, ended up
11 moving up here. Of course there is no fish left to
12 work on in Washington.

13 I came in from fishing today. I would like
14 to say that I am kind of shocked that I would have to
15 come in and testify for an environmentally sustainable
16 fishery against a practice such as the damnation of
17 one's wild rivers.

18 But I am not shocked. The salmon have,
19 culture depended on them 100, 200 years ago or those
20 of you who fished them now.

21 I just quit smoking this winter, and I
22 thought of an interesting analogy, because of the
23 cigarette companies have always said, smoking does not
24 cause lung cancer. And I was reading a book called
25 Mountain in the Clouds by Brown, which anybody should

61

1 read that has anything to do with salmon management,

2 and it's about what happened to the salmon.

3 He studied it for 50 years. And back in
4 the 1930's everybody knew the dams were going to
5 destroy salmon. I mean, people hired scientists who
6 would apologize and say this is not going to happen.

7 There is plenty of evidence. Fisheries
8 resources, he knew it was going on. But it's been
9 denied and it's continued to be denied.

10 And what happened basically was that people
11 made a choice. People made a choice to develop
12 industry, people made a choice to rob water out of the
13 Columbia River in order to stimulate agribusiness.

14 So they made a choice to kill forever Snake
15 River Chinook, and now they expect to put those of us
16 who live in southeast communities out of business
17 apparently to save one or two fish from being
18 incidentally murdered by the dams.

19 That choice has been made. Unless people
20 want to breach the dams, which I do support. But I
21 think you need to take all the dams out actually.

22 Personally, if you really want to save the
23 salmon, and whatever costs are involved with trying to
24 do that safely, I don't even want to think about. But
25 I think that's really what needs to be done.

1 These rivers free throwing move sediment
2 around, that's what creates the salmon and rearing
3 habitat. They need that. They just cannot function
4 without that. They need free-flowing rivers.

5 And like salmon and free-flowing rivers,
6 the economy here is kind of interdependent in ways
7 like that, too. And if you take away our right to
8 fish on our abundant fish, you're going to kill, you
9 know, the processors depend on it, and the restaurants
10 depend on it, you are going to turn southeast Alaska
11 into a ghost town area.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
14 very much, Paul.

15 Pat Kehoe, followed by Stephen Snapp,
16 followed by Ron Rau.

17 MS. PAT KEHOE: Hi. I am Pat Kehoe.
18 I have been commercial fishing in southeast Alaska for
19 19 years with my husband and two daughters.

20 Trolling is our lifestyle as well as our
21 means of making a living. We, like other people in
22 the commercial fishing business, charter fishing
23 industry, sport fishing, native community and local
24 businesses, all depend on salmon as the backbone of
25 the coastal communities of southeast Alaska.

1 We have been willing to sacrifice through
2 the years to help prevent damage to the salmon run,
3 but all our sacrifices are meaningless unless the fish
4 habitat -- fish have habitat once again.

5 Everything I've read shows that breaching
6 the Snake River dams and possibly the John Day Dam can
7 provide the habitat that these fish need to have
8 healthy stocks again.

9 It has been shown other places and most
10 recently I believe on a tributary of the Sacramento
11 River that the salmon stocks are able to recuperate
12 well if the dams are breached before the stocks are
13 extincted.

14 It is your responsibility to see that
15 that's done now. You have the opportunity to do
16 something really worthwhile for the salmon and for the
17 Pacific Northwest.

18 Breach the dams. And if you shuffle papers
19 too long the fate of the salmon will be your fault.

20 Thanks.

21 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,

22 Pat. Stephen Snapp, followed by Ron Rau, followed by
23 Robert Ellis.

24 MR. STEPHEN SNAPP: Good evening. I
25 would like to welcome the caucus, and thank you for

64

1 taking our testimony.

2 My name is Stephen Snapp. I am a troller
3 and a member of Seafood Producers Co-op, who has
4 already been introduced to you earlier this evening.

5 I have been a commercial fisherman for 25
6 years and put myself through college by working at a
7 cannery in Friday Harbor. Of course the cannery is no
8 longer operating.

9 I fished salmon from a troller from
10 Monterey, California, to Icy Bay in the northern gulf
11 of Alaska.

12 Mixed stock salmon fishery is managed, that
13 is, restricted, in order to minimize its impact on the
14 weakest salmon stock to be encountered.

15 I have seen failed management practices in
16 the form of zealous harvest restrictions force the
17 financial and culture bankruptcies of communities
18 throughout the coasts of Washington, California,

19 British Columbia. It is sad indeed to see once busy
20 vessels, boat yards, fish process plants and harbors
21 sit idle, falling into disrepair.

22 What has happened to these people and their
23 families? If harvest reduction -- pardon me. If
24 harvest was the problem, certainly these sacrifices
25 would have formed the solution, would not the weak

65

1 stocks in the Columbia have rebounded by now?

2 Ladies and gentlemen, we must address the
3 habitat question in a serious and expedient manner
4 before our options run out. Bold actions are
5 mandatory or failure is certain. Set a new precedent
6 and breach the dams on the Snake River and show what
7 habitat restoration can do.

8 I suspect that more than salmon will
9 rebound, as birds, mammals and invertebrates thrive
10 along this major river.

11 Breach those dams.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
14 very much, Stephen.

15 Ron Rau, followed by Robert Ellis, followed
16 by Carter Hughes.

17 MR. RON RAU: Hi. My name is Ron
18 Rau.

19 I have been a troller for 25 years, like
20 many of us, and I would like to take this chance to
21 welcome you to Alaska, hope you enjoy your stay
22 here.

23 I have nothing new to say. You have heard
24 it before. Except to reiterate that we trollers have
25 done our share of sacrificing. And I have no guilt

66

1 feelings at all that we haven't done our part for the
2 conservation of the king salmon.

3 Now if I may, I would like to turn around
4 and address my fellow Alaskans, and you can take a
5 break or listen. But I want to read to you today from
6 the Sitka Sentinel here what the three stooges we send
7 to Washington, D.C., have to say about this.

8 It was on the front page of the Sitka
9 Sentinel. Here comes Braberkowsky. Well, while I
10 share their concerns about the loss of fish runs,
11 we've reached a point where biologists tell you we are

12 beyond the point of being able to renew the runs.
13 Now, the biologist that Braberkowsky has listened to
14 are from BP and ARCO, so maybe he is using the same
15 ones.

16 Here is Ted Stephens. It is also a
17 question of where the power will come from to replace
18 the dams, electronic generation. Where the money will
19 come from to destroy them. Can you imagine Ted
20 Stephens worried about money? Where the money will
21 come from to destroy them and whether the destruction
22 of the dams is the only method of protecting the fish
23 run.

24 Here is Don Young. Well, he doesn't say
25 much at all. He says, he isn't convinced that the

67

1 dams are the problem. Young says he is a flat out no
2 vote on the question of dam removal.

3 So, you know, the thing that concerns me
4 here is a lack of concern on their part. There is not
5 even lip service here for our situation. And it might
6 be, as the great philosopher Pogo said, we have met
7 the enemy and he is us.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you very
10 much, Ron.

11 Robert Ellis, followed by Carter Hughes,
12 followed by Linda Behnken, I think it is.

13 MR. ROBERT ELLIS: Robert Ellis. I
14 don't really know what to add. I think you have
15 received a tremendous amount of information from the
16 people here. They really have a good grasp of what's
17 going on.

18 I started out working in Michigan on a
19 stream that was being rehabilitated. And this was
20 several years ago now. But one of the things I'm
21 really pleased with from all the people that have been
22 speaking here tonight is the emphasis on restoring
23 habitat.

24 To my mind if we preserved -- restore the
25 habitat and preserve it, that the fish will just about

68

1 take care of themselves. It would be pretty hard for
2 overfishing to take place.

3 I lived in Astoria back in the late '50s,
4 and I went to a meeting, and I was working for the

5 Oregon Fish Commission then, where the managers had to
6 tell the fishermen, sorry, no opening this period, the
7 runs are going down.

8 And this was at a time when most of the
9 biologists were convinced that we had the technology
10 to get the fish up and down over the damages.

11 And I think that what we've learned in the
12 last 40 years is we did not have the technology to get
13 the fish up and over the dams.

14 And I think that the people are correct
15 here who are saying, take the dams out, restore the
16 habitat, get back into the watersheds and do the
17 restoration in the tributaries that is needed. That's
18 where we should be putting our bucks.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
21 Robert.

22 Carter Hughes, followed by Linda Behnken,
23 followed by Rick McLean.

24 MR. CARTER HUGHES: Good evening. My
25 name is Carter Hughes. I'm a troller from the fishing

1 village of Pelican, a town that was built on salmon
2 harvest.

3 I have made my living in the Alaskan
4 seafood industry for the past 16 years and as a
5 troller for 12.

6 I come before you to testify about the
7 removal of four dams on the Snake River.

8 Okay. I support the removal of these dams,
9 and restoring the habitat that was knowingly and
10 willingly destroyed when they were installed.

11 And I will read a little paragraph from
12 this, as a case in point. The Pacific Coast states,
13 in the Pacific Coast states the encroachment of
14 civilization seriously interferes with salmon
15 resources. Among the many unfavorable conditions
16 brought on by population, industrial growth, the most
17 harmful to salmon are pollution, deforestation,
18 irrigation diversions and dams.

19 Consequence. The outlook for enlarging
20 salmon resources in the Pacific states is not
21 promising. Indeed they can be maintained at their
22 present subnatural level only by constant vigilance
23 and the utmost care.

24 This is a report from the Secretary of
25 Interior dated March 1, 1945, Fishery Resources in the

1 United States.

2 So as everyone has been saying, this has
3 been known about for a long time. Yet in the '60s
4 these four dams, '60s and '70s these four dams were
5 put in place.

6 The fact of the matter is that if we didn't
7 exist, you would still have a problem. Our harvest
8 has been cut back periodically over the years, all to
9 no avail. And last year we took a cut of over 40
10 percent, or around 40 percent with the signing of the
11 new treaty.

12 Part of this new agreement involves the no
13 jeopardy finding by NMFS.

14 Here in southeast Alaska we do not have a
15 lot of work alternatives. The 50 to 75 percent
16 reduction would put me out of business, as it would
17 have a massive ripple into the Coho fishery as well.

18 We don't get cheap power. We don't get
19 cheap oil even. You know, if this is shut down with
20 these types of reductions, we are basically out of
21 work here.

22 So anyway, I hope you go back to your
23 region and deal with the main cause of the problem,
24 and remove the dams, but if not, I wish you would just

25 get off our backs and let us get on with our lives.

71

1 Thank you very much for the opportunity to
2 testify, and that's all I have to say.

3 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
4 Carter.

5 Linda Behnken, followed by Rick McLean,
6 followed by David Stark.

7 MS. LINDA BEHNKEN: Well, my name is
8 Linda Behnken. I have been a commercial fisherman for
9 16 years. I am also director of the Alaska Long Line
10 Fishermens Association and I am speaking today on
11 their behalf. ALLF is a nonprofit fishing association
12 of approximately 100 members who reside in Sitka,
13 Pelican, Petersberg, Ketchikan, Upsnow, Port
14 Alexander, and cities and towns in the lower 48.

15 Our association has a long history of
16 supporting conservation measures, including reductions
17 in harvest, when indicated to preserve the health of a
18 particular stock or the health of an ecosystem in
19 general.

20 We have supported cuts in the fishery,

18 testifying, Linda.

19 Rick McLean, followed by David Stark,
20 followed by I think it is Volney Smith. Okay. Thank
21 you. I will get it right next time.

22 Rick McLean, are you here?

23 How about David Stark? Great. Followed by
24 Volney Smith, followed by Charles Wilber.

25 MR. DAVID STARK: I would like this

73

1 to be relatively brief, since most of the things that
2 I had to say have been said before.

3 I would like to qualify myself by saying
4 I'm not a fisherman, commercial fisherman, although I
5 have had considerable involvement in subsistence
6 fishing throughout the state.

7 I would like to follow the rest of the
8 people who have noted that the problems with the dams
9 have been well known, documented, for the past 33
10 years that I have been in Alaska and before I came to
11 Alaska, and that as the dams were being made, and put
12 together, everybody knew and has known that there were
13 problems in terms of the salmon.

14 And it seems to me that in correcting the
15 problem, any panel is going to have to come back to
16 habitat and to getting rid of the main problems of the
17 habitat reduction which in my opinion is the dams.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Okay. Thank
20 you very much, David.

21 Volney Smith, followed by Charles Wilbur,
22 followed by Paul Yanak.

23 MR. VOLNEY SMITH: Thank you, panel,
24 for you coming here this evening.

25 I will keep this relatively short. I think

74

1 everything has been hit on pretty much.

2 I have been fishing since 1970, raised a
3 family. I have always wanted to have fish around, all
4 Alaskans have been that way since I started fishing,
5 they have always thought of what's going to happen if,
6 and we have gone long line, limited fisheries, had
7 hatcheries.

8 Our stocks are in fine shape. The ones
9 that we are fishing on are mostly in fine shape. Even
10 last year there was a lot of fish above Bonneville

11 Dam, which I guess a first for some time. I don't
12 know why they were back, but we must have had
13 something to do with it somewhere along the line.
14 Maybe the Canadians were fishing on them to speak of.

15 Prior to the salmon treaty we had a
16 ten-year average of 325,000 fish. We have since given
17 up over 50 percent of those fish, for the sake of a
18 future. There is no more warm and fuzzy feeling with
19 what we are trying to do here.

20 I think you probably get that feeling, and
21 it is nothing personal. But I just cannot see this
22 getting any better, the folk in salmon, until they
23 really address their problem.

24 We have given, and here in Sitka there is
25 nothing else to do. We can't all work at the Forest

75

1 Service and we can't all work for the government, and
2 we can't all be school teachers.

3 When the fishing shuts down now, and as you
4 heard Pete Esquire say earlier, we have a lot at stake
5 with our own hatcheries, and if we can't even harvest
6 those due to mortalities on these extinct few, we have

7 really got no reason to go on at all.

8 And it's been said many times tonight that
9 we know where the problem is, and I think you people
10 all know where the problem is, and there's not one of
11 us up here that hasn't given and hopes to straighten
12 it out.

13 But the truth is, it's not going to be
14 straightened out up here, it has to be straightened
15 out down there.

16 Fish are very resilient and with very
17 little effort they will survive. And only man can
18 stop them. Dams are not enough good habitat.

19 I like to thank you for letting me speak
20 this evening, and if you are in town and have got a
21 few minutes, want to see a state-of-the-art cold
22 storage, you might go down and take a look at SPC down
23 there. You might be very impressed with what we have
24 done.

25 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you

76

1 very much.

2 Charles Wilber, followed by Paul Yanak,
3 followed by J. Erie.

4 Charles? Paul? J. Erie. Followed by Seth
5 Bone, followed by John Slang.

6 MR. J. ERIE: I didn't expect to be
7 able to do anything, so I just brought at least one.
8 I am J. Erie.

9 I currently commercially fish for salmon
10 here in southeast Alaska.

11 I have another option, and it goes with
12 ocean survival. And if the outgoing salmon make it to
13 the ocean, they still have to eat and have shelter
14 from the larger critters.

15 The severe loss of ocean habitat further
16 complicates all the other fisheries management
17 programs that are currently in place along the United
18 States and Canada. But it's the cumulative
19 destruction of habitat and the major reduction in
20 hearing population over the last hundred years that
21 has also contributed to the current crisis we are at
22 right now.

23 This huge loss of food and shelter for
24 growing salmon, I guess you know, the fact that they
25 need to eat when they get there.

1 Sure, you can take dams out or not have the
2 dams out. But they still have to eat and have this
3 shelter. And the document, this here, I have tried to
4 look up old photos, but most of the old photos are so
5 poor they don't show where old kelp beds used to be.

6 But with the huge herring reduction plans
7 that we had here from the '40s to the '60s, we took
8 away their foods, we built dams, we built hatcheries,
9 we shipped the food change, and then we expected to
10 solve the problem by blowing up dams, not having up
11 buffer zone in Washington.

12 What probably needs to be done is to set up
13 biological refuges to allow redevelopment of the kelp
14 beds along the coast and to also allow the herring
15 stocks to rebuild.

16 And I also would consider breaching the
17 four dams to be considered acceptable. And to
18 establish larger tree and buffer zones in Washington
19 and Oregon.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Great. Thank
22 you very much for the suggestions.

23 Seth Bone, followed by John Slang, followed
24 by Robert, you are the last one on the sheet, Edered?

25 MS. SETH BONE: Thank you. Thank you

1 for coming here.

2 I would just like to say, I am a charter
3 fisherman, and I own a business that books up 15 other
4 local charter fishermen. I am not an expert on a lot
5 of the issues here, but I know from our industry's
6 perspective, that if we were to face a 50 to 75
7 percent harvest reduction in Chinook, it wouldn't just
8 mean that we would make less money, it means that we
9 would go under, we just wouldn't be able to do it any
10 more.

11 And I suspect it's a lot the same with the
12 trollers. We are not making a killing to begin with,
13 and it is a relatively short season, we have already
14 faced a lot of cutbacks, we are sort of up against it
15 in terms of harvest levels, and another drastic
16 reduction would just do it, it would be the end for
17 us.

18 And I guess if that was, if you could say,
19 well, we are the main problem, you know, and so you
20 guys are just going to have to suck it up and take it,
21 because you guys are the main problem, well, maybe you
22 will just have to do it.

23 If we were the ones that were responsible

24 for the poor shape these salmon runs are in, I guess
25 that would be what would have to happen.

79

1 But, from everything I have read, it just
2 doesn't sound like that's the case. It sounds more
3 like the dams are really the main cause of the poor
4 shape of the stocks at this point, and even if you
5 just took us away completely, it wouldn't really fix
6 that, you know, it may just prolong the time to
7 extinction.

8 So I guess I would just like to say, favor
9 the breaching of the dams, and I guess if that is the
10 main problem, then take it on head on, and spread the
11 costs out over as broad a population as possible in
12 terms of helping the people that are hurt by that
13 action.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
16 Seth.

17 John Slang, followed by Robert Edered,
18 followed by Anton, and your pen ran out.

19 MR. ANTON BOWERS: Bowers.

20 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
21 Anton.

22 John Slang, are you here? Robert Edered,
23 are you here? Anton Bowers, you are up.

24 MR. ANTON BOWERS: Okay. My name is
25 Anton Bowers. I am a fisherman, albeit not a salmon

80

1 fisherman. But I was trained as a civil engineer, and
2 I hate seeing anything that was once built, destroyed.

3 It seems to me that there might be other
4 solutions other than actually tearing down dams. But
5 if that's the only solution, I would say the salmon is
6 more important than the dams.

7 However, as far as I can tell, the only
8 real data you have is that dams were built over the
9 lower Snake in '75, or the late '70s anyway, and fish
10 out of the Columbia started disappearing in the late
11 '70s.

12 Other things started happening in the late
13 '70s as well, however, that you may not be considering
14 or might be politically incorrect to consider. But
15 the Columbia wasn't the only stream that fish started
16 disappearing from. All the Northern California,

17 Oregon, Washington, even up to the Frazier River now,
18 fish are disappearing, salmon. And they're not
19 building dams.

20 Some people blame overfishing. Some
21 pollution. Others el nino' or la nino', or both. The
22 reduction of the Cedar River is blamed by the King
23 County surface water management team on
24 overdevelopment of therefore too much running down the
25 Cedar River, whereas the city of Seattle, which owns

81

1 two-thirds of the Cedar watershed, uses that as their
2 source of water for the city of Seattle, says they are
3 not getting enough water in the Cedar River, and they
4 plan to dump more.

5 Actually, nobody really knows what's
6 happened to the fish. And it most probably is a
7 combination of most of these things I have just
8 mentioned.

9 However, there is one thing that some have
10 the timidity to suggest, highly political, incorrect,
11 and therefore since that seems to be my forte', I will
12 discuss that one. And this is the exponential

13 increase in California sea lions and harbor seals
14 which also originate in California.

15 This graph I have just passed around shows
16 that the California sea lion has increased from, to
17 count California sea lions, since they are in the
18 water more than they are out, they count the pups when
19 they are born, since they are born in a short period
20 of time and they are usually on the beach for a
21 certain period of time, they count them, and in '75
22 they counted 11,500 pups. And in '95 they counted
23 37,000. Increase of over three times.

24 And since these counts are being done from
25 aerial surveys, they find that they usually get more

82

1 if they count them on the ground than the aerial
2 surveys. So it is more like four times, in 20 years,
3 the same 20 years that you are talking about with your
4 dams.

5 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Anton, I need
6 to you ask you to wrap up there.

7 MR. ANTON BOWERS: All right. The
8 harbor seals have increased in the same dimension.
9 From 5,000 in '75 to 23,000 in '95.

10 Okay. You asked me to wrap it up. NMFS,
11 who I get this data from, the marine mammal lab of
12 Northwest Fisheries Research Center, is hamstrung in
13 getting this information. The Marine Mammal Act of
14 '75 will not allow them to take sea lions to determine
15 what is in their stomach to see if they are the
16 problem, or how much they are eating.

17 They don't know. They are going through a
18 rather roundabout way which is not very accurate.

19 The same thing is true with the --

20 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Anton?

21 MR. ANTON BOWERS: Just one minute.

22 They suspect that maybe the orcas are wiping them out,
23 but the Marine Mammal Act won't let anyone to take
24 orcas to determine.

25 One more thing. Dr. Marlin Faultlin, which

83

1 is the orca research scientist, the Northwest Science
2 Center, is trying to catalog all the orca. All of
3 them. And she needs pictures from anybody, from any
4 source, of orcas with where approximately, as close as
5 you can get, where and when the pictures are taken.

6 I've got to get out of here. Her address is the
7 Northwest Fishery Science Center at NOAH, Sandpoint,
8 Seattle.

9 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thanks a lot,
10 Anton.

11 All right. We've got Marty Remund. Is
12 anybody else who was out of the room when I called
13 your name?

14 If you have already signed up, let me know,
15 or if you wanted to sign up or wanted to speak, come
16 up and let me know.

17 MR. MARTY REMUND: Okay. This is a
18 resolution from the city of Port Alexander supporting
19 partial removal of the four Lower Snake River dams.

20 The history and culture of the community of
21 Port Alexander is commercial fishing. During the
22 1930s it has written that the Port Alexander harbor is
23 the largest fishing fleet in Alaska.

24 Since the early 1900's Port Alexander and
25 waters surrounding it have been the homegrounds for

84

1 commercial fishing. Trolling in particular.

2 Due to the development of our community

3 around the troll fishery and remote setting, other
4 employment opportunities virtually did not exist that
5 could sustain our family.

6 The community of Port Alexander as a whole
7 will be directly impacted by any loss of Chinook
8 salmon outside the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

9 Any further reductions on Chinook harvest
10 would create an intolerable hardship on our community.
11 Lifestyles and livelihoods could be seriously impaired
12 or lost. At risk is Port Alexander's culture
13 identification with its past as well as the stability
14 and preservation of Port Alexander as a community
15 looking for a secure and stable future.

16 Commercial salmon touring is a part of our
17 Port Alexander's economy. The commercial salmon
18 fishery provides sustainable jobs in our community and
19 benefits our community and the state of Alaska.

20 There are 27 troll permits in Port
21 Alexander an approximately 34 year around households.
22 The commercial salmon fishery significantly
23 contributing to the city of Port Alexander through its
24 contribution of raw fish tax as well as moneys
25 received from sales tax from the fish buying in our

1 harbor in the summer.

2 Three new lodges also rely on Chinook
3 salmon as part of their businesses and also contribute
4 to our local economy through their contribution of bed
5 and sales tax. As well as their contribution to the
6 state of Alaska.

7 In 1999 Pacific Salmon Treaty Chinook
8 management was determined by the National Marine
9 Fisheries Service to meet Endangered Species Act
10 requirements for fall Chinook.

11 Since 1993 the Chinook salmon harvest in
12 southeast Alaska has been further reduced,
13 specifically to protect the ESA with the Snake River
14 fall Chinook.

15 Governor Tony Knowles, southeast Alaska
16 fishing community, and statewide fishing and
17 conservation organizations, have called for
18 implementation of the 1999 Pacific salmon treaty
19 agreement. And a commitment to save passage of salmon
20 to and from their spawning habitat on the rivers of
21 the Pacific Northwest, Canada and Alaska.

22 Therefore, be it resolved that the city of
23 Port Alexander in order to protect wild salmon and the
24 thousands of southeast Alaska families that depend on
25 wild fish supports the partial removal of the Ice

1 Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Lower
2 Granite dams on the Snake River.

3 That's it.

4 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Okay. Thank
5 you very much, Marty.

6 Was there anybody else left who wanted to
7 testify?

8 All right. Would you like to testify?
9 Okay. Come on up. You can say your name so we can
10 get it down on the record.

11 MR. RALPH JOHNSON: My name is Ralph
12 Johnson. I have lived here in Sitka since 1960. I do
13 both subsistence, sport fishing and commercial and
14 full commercial fishing.

15 I believe that, I totally support the
16 fishermen from southeast Alaska, that there are people
17 out there fishing, whenever there is opening, because
18 that is their livelihood. It is their job, of income.

19 And I do hand trolling to supplement my
20 income, where I work. And I believe that what I have
21 heard here, I totally support that, we are not to
22 blame. We are not taking anybody's fish. Because we

23 have a very well controlled fishery here in southeast,
24 we told when to fish, when not to fish.

25 Any escapement from the hatcheries, we

87

1 fish, and follow the regulations as we are told. And
2 I want you to hear this from the people, not politics,
3 that we are the people here that are speaking to be
4 heard, and I want you to take that from us.

5 It comes from us that we fish for a living,
6 we fish for the table. I want you to hear it from us,
7 that it is `coming from us, and I want you to take
8 that back with you.

9 Thank you for letting me speak.

10 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you
11 very much, Ralph.

12 I saw one last hand there, one last three
13 minute testimony here. Another hand there. Okay.
14 All right. I think you just joined us, so --

15 MR. BOB CRANSTON: I signed in.

16 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: So she will
17 ring the bell when you have a minute left.

18 MR. BOB CRANSTON: I am Bob Cranston.

19 I am 73 years old. The first time I heard about dams
20 and the protection of fish with dams was when I was
21 about ten or eleven, probably about 1936 or '37. I've
22 seen many programs on it ever since then. Probably 25
23 times. And it's just proved to be a fraud, a fraud on
24 Mother Nature, a fraud on the fishermen, a fraud on
25 the fish.

88

1 I think we are facing now a revolution in
2 the production of electrical energy. The fuel cell,
3 and other things like this, revolution in the storage
4 of electrical energy.

5 And I think that it's time for a lot of
6 dams to come down and face this revolution.

7 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Okay. Thanks
8 very much.

9 MR. JACK PHILLIPS: My name is Jack
10 Phillips. I was born and raised here. I have spent
11 my entire life commercial fishing, mostly for salmon.
12 In 1970 or '76 I was appointed a member of the Pacific
13 Main Fisheries Commission. And then I was also later
14 on, I was appointed as an advisory member to the North
15 Pacific Fisheries.

16 What I am trying to say is that dams and
17 the habitat was an issue 30 years ago, as people were
18 saying, and I met with representatives of Washington,
19 Oregon, Idaho on these issues. We had very important
20 things. Magnusen Act, a lot of things, run the
21 foreigners out of our back yard.

22 But all in these various meetings we had,
23 there was always this issue, salmon rehabilitation.
24 And the main thing was dam, breach -- not breach the
25 dams at that time, but of course how do you get around

89

1 this, how do you get around these dams. Because that
2 was the problem.

3 And it was the best scientists 30 years
4 ago, and it seems to be the best scientists now.

5 Breach the dams. You have got to get that
6 habitat back or your fish are lost.

7 Thank you.

8 MS. DONNA SILVERBERG: Thank you,
9 Jack.

10 Anybody else at this point? One more.

11 Okay. Come on down.

12 MR. JAMES PHILLIPS: I am sorry. My
13 name is James Phillips. I live in Pelican. And I am
14 here representing myself. I thank you members for
15 coming up.

16 I can understand those folks down there,
17 because we have a dam in our little city, a little
18 hydroelectric power plan. It's not very big. It was
19 built on a side tributary. And they built it in '44
20 as a temporary dam, and it's still there. Its wooden
21 flumes are still, rotten, but it's really not rotting,
22 because it's preserved. But luckily it's not a fish
23 river.

24 But I do, myself and my four boys and my
25 wife, we would like you to breach the four dams. It

90

1 obvious leads to fish habitat. The Lord knows, we all
2 know it, look how much concrete they put in our fine
3 Floreses and millions and millions of acres.

4 I've never seen it. I went down and went
5 on some of them dams on the Columbia River, took my
6 family there, so we could see it first hand. Because,
7 you know, I don't like to kick the guy over there just
8 because, you know, it is bothering me up here.

2 County of Umatilla) ss.
3)

4 I, William J. Bridges, do hereby certify
5 that at the time and place heretofore mentioned in the
6 caption of the foregoing matter, I was a Certified
7 Shorthand Reporter for the State of Oregon; that at
8 said time and place I reported in stenotype all
9 testimony adduced and proceedings had in the foregoing
10 matter; that thereafter my notes were reduced to
11 typewriting and that the foregoing transcript
12 consisting, of 92 typewritten pages is a true and
13 correct transcript of all such testimony adduced and
14 proceedings had and of the whole thereof.

15 Witness my hand at Pendleton, Oregon, on
16 this _____ day of April, 2000.

17
18
19
20
21 _____
22 William J. Bridges
23 Certified Shorthand Reporter
24 Certificate No. 91-0244
25 My certificate expires: 10-31-02